GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4583
ANSWERED ON:22.04.2002
DEFORESTATION AND ANIMAL GRAZINGS IN HILLY REGIONS
M.H. AMBAREESH

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the entire hilly region of the country face a tough environmental challenge due to the rapid deforestation and animal grazings;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the assessment of environmental hazards which have affected the environmental balance in this region; and

(c) the steps the Government have taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) & (b) There are no indications that the entire hilly region of the country face a tough environmental challenge due to the rapid deforestation and animal grazings. According to the `State of Forest Report 1999` by the Forest Survey of India,there has been a net increase of 324 sq.km in the forest cover of the hilly states since 1997. However, due to biotic pressure from rising human and cattle population, there are challenges for conservation of the fragile ecology of the hills.

(c) The various steps taken by the Central Government for further improvement in the condition of environment of the hilly region include afforestation, forest protection, joint forest management and various other programmes/schemes for environmental conservation.